

# CAN E-CONTENT REPLACE TEACHER IN CLASS ROOM?

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## ABSTRACT

*In fact, education and learning are interrelated concepts and this means that we cannot separate one from another. Education, on the one hand, in its general sense is a form of learning in which the knowledge, skills, and habits of a group of people are transferred from one generation to the next through teaching, training, or research under the guidance of others. Learning, on the other hand, is the process of gaining these knowledge, skills, and habits by learners themselves, without the guidance of others. The aim of this study is to evaluate an e-learning program versus traditional education instruction through the review of the advantages and disadvantages of each, with a view to address some of the disadvantages of e-learning. The researcher used the descriptive approach to make both the comparison and the evaluation. To evaluate e-learning versus traditional learning, the researcher used three major tools; namely, SWOT analysis, Comparisons, and Questionnaire. The results of the study showed that there are significant differences between the advantages and disadvantages of both Traditional Learning and E-learning in favor of E-learning. The study recommended the use of Blended Learning (B-Learning) for it addresses the deficiencies of both e-learning and traditional learning.*

**KEYWORDS:** *E-content, E-learning, Distance Learning , Blended Learning and Traditional Learning*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In fact, education and learning are interrelated concepts and this means that we cannot separate one from another. Education in its general sense is a form of learning in which the knowledge, skills, and habits of a group of people are transferred from one generation to the next through teaching, training, or research. Education frequently takes place under the guidance of others, but may also be autodidactic. On the other hand, learning is the process of gaining these knowledge, skills, and habits by learners themselves. In fact, education can be delivered using various methods which gives various types of learning including: (1) Traditional Lecturing is usually defined as actions under the guidance of the teacher aiming at bringing some relatively permanent change in the way students think, feel act; (2)E-learning (Electronic Learning) is usually defined as education based on modern methods of communication including the computer and its networks, various audio-visual materials, search engines, electronic libraries, and websites, whether accomplished in the classroom or at a distance; (3) M-learning (Mobile Learning) is usually defined as learning by means of wireless technological devices that can be pocketed and utilized wherever the learner's device is able to receive unbroken transmission signals; (4) D-learning (Distance Learning) is usually defined as all learning that takes place where there is no face to face interaction between students and between students and teachers; (5) B-learning (Blended Learning) is usually defined as enriched, student entered learning experiences made possible by the harmonious integration of various strategies, achieved by combining face-to-face interaction with information and communication technology (ICT).

This paper compares between traditional lecturing and e-learning as two different teaching methods for acquiring knowledge, evaluating the effectiveness of an e-learning program versus traditional education instruction through the assessment of the outcome scores of a questionnaire of different views on using e-learning and lectures in education. There are many advantages of e-learning for both learners and teachers. For learners, learning is self-paced and gives students a chance to speed up or slow down as necessary, convenient for students to access any time, any place. Learning is also self-directed, allowing students to choose content and tools appropriate to their different interests, needs, and skill levels (Favretto, Garamia, &Guardini, 2005).

For the teachers e-learning makes tutoring can be done at anytime and from anywhere. Online learning systems can be used to determine learners' needs and to assign appropriate materials for learners to select from so as to achieve the desired learning outcomes (Anderson & Elloumi, 2004). On the other hand, there are some disadvantages of e-learning. For example, the learners need to have access to a computer and the Internet and need to have computer skills to deal with programs such as word processing, Internet browsers, and e-mail. As the aim of this paper is to evaluate e-learning program versus traditional learning.

Technological evolution has obviously made our lives easier and more efficient. With that said, it only seems fit that we should utilize online learning in our colleges and universities. Or shouldn't we? While it may seem fit that we adapt our learning style to keep up with the technology available to us, there are reasons to believe that online courses are not nearly as beneficial to us as traditional style classroom learning.

## **2. ONLINE VS. CLASSROOM LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

The impact of learning environments in relation to learning outcomes has constantly been explored by researchers of education. For example, Ramsden and Entwistle (1981) empirically identified a relationship between approaches to learning and perceived characteristics of the academic environment. Haertela, Walberg, and Haertela (1981) found correlations between student perceptions of social psychological environments of their classes and learning outcomes. Web-based technology has noticeably transformed the learning and teaching environment. Proponents of online learning have seen that it can be effective in potentially eliminating barriers while providing increased convenience, flexibility, currency of material, customized learning, and feedback over a traditional face-to-face experience (Hackbarth, 1996; Harasim, 1990; Kiser, 1999; Matthews, 1999; Swan et al., 2000). Opponents, however, are concerned that students in an online environment may feel isolated (Brown, 1996), confused, and frustrated (Hara & Kling, 2000) and that student's interest in the subject and learning effectiveness may be reduced (R. Maki, W. Maki, Patterson, & Whittaker, 2000).

The following section examines two key differences of learning effectiveness— interaction and student performance—between the online and classroom learning environments. Interaction An important component of classroom learning is the social and communicative interactions between student and teacher, and student and student. A student's ability to ask a question, to share an opinion, or to disagree with a point of view are fundamental learning activities. It is often through conversation, discourse, discussion, and debate among students and between instructors and students that a new concept is clarified, an old assumption is challenged, a skill is practiced, an original idea is formed and encouraged, and ultimately, a learning objective is achieved. Online learning requires adjustments by instructors as well as students for successful interactions to occur. Online courses often substitute classroom interaction with discussion boards, synchronous chat, electronic bulletin boards, and e-mails. The effectiveness of such a virtual interactive venue is not without debate. Student-to-instructor and student-to-student interactions are important elements in the design of a Web-based course (Fulford & Zhang, 1993; Kumari, 2001; Sherry, 1996) because learners can experience a "sense of community," enjoy mutual interdependence, build a "sense of trust," and have shared goals and values (Davies & Graff, 2005; Rovai, 2002).

## **3. LACK OF INTERPERSONAL SKILL DEVELOPMENT**

Online courses usually require no face to face interaction with classmates or teachers. Information on assignments is posted online and may be completed at leisure without having to attend class meetings. While the leisure of this concept is nice, it takes away from the interpersonal skills that students need to acquire along with their education.

When in a classroom, students may be required to speak their mind. They may be required to give presentations or speeches. They will have to work in groups with all kinds of people with many differing viewpoints. Online courses require none of that. Businesses often tell university faculty that they wish graduating students had more interpersonal skills. They say it is crucial to success in their careers. Traditional style learning teaches these things. If anything, online courses will only hurt a student's ability to speak and interact with others in a way that will help them in their life and career.

When students are required to interact with classmates and professors, they gain confidence in their ability to speak and interact with others. It grants them the opportunity to learn how to carry themselves in a professional manner. Because online learning can't do this, its value to a student is significantly lower.

#### 4. LACKS OF MEMORY AND LEARNING DEVELOPMENT

Why do many students sign up for online courses? Well, one reason is of course the fact that they do not have to attend an actual class and can learn at home. A more serious, unspoken reason however may be the fact that online learning does not require the student to study or memorize material in the way that traditional learning does.

Students taking a test or quiz online do not have to worry about a professor catching them cheating. Students have the ability to use a book and quickly look up answers online. Even while many tests are timed and many professors don't mind the use of a book on certain things, is this really the way a student should learn? When someone does not have to study and memorize material, it does not embed in his or her long term memory the way it does when they do study it. This is a serious flaw with online courses. It does not promote memory development. Students may not realize it while enrolled in a difficult course, but they will better appreciate the education they receive in college if they are required to put in more effort in obtaining it. A child does not learn how to spell by looking up words in a dictionary, he memorizes the words using flashcards or something similar. This is what enables him to actually learn.

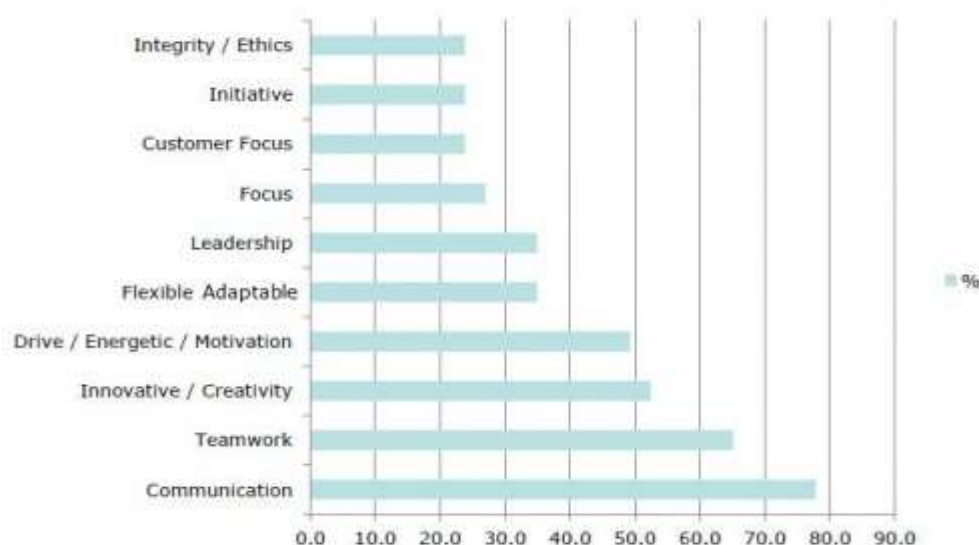
#### 5. LACK OF STUDENT MOTIVATION

One problem with online classes is that all too often, they motivate us to get a degree, but not to learn. Having debates and in class discussions with multiple professors who all have unique personalities motivates students to develop their own opinions. It motivates them to want to voice their opinions. If a student is scared to voice his or her opinion, the classroom is the place he will practice overcoming that fear, not online.

When students receive face to face verbal feedback and constructive criticism from their professors, it instills in them a motivation to not want to let their professors down. It is the relationships and bonds that are formed that give face to face learning an advantage over online learning.

Motivation is a skill that cannot be developed when students are allowed to complete task at their own leisure. They may get the work done, but this does not teach a student how to complete task under the pressure of time. During their careers, they will need to complete task in a certain amount of time on a whim when they are told. If a professor assigns a paper at the start of class and requires it be handed in at the end, that is good preparation for a career. Reading about a similar assignment online that is due in six days doesn't teach this.

#### 6. WHAT EMPLOYERS LOOK FOR IN GRADUATES?



A recent seminar consisting of 85 companies was held in Ireland. Business leaders from these companies were asked which competencies they most wanted to see from graduates. The two highest percentage answers chosen were teamwork and communication.

According to the survey done by <https://www.freelancer.com>

## 7. WHAT KIND OF COURSE DO YOU THINK IS MORE EFFECTIVE?

- 64% Traditional
- 6% Online
- 6% They are equally effective.
- 24% It depends on the person.

1005 people have voted in this poll.

There are several benefits to **e-learning** whether you choose to use it on its own, or to enhance your existing in house training. I've listed a few below:

### 7.1 It's cost effective and saves time

By reducing the time taken away from the office, removing travel costs and doing away with printed materials, online learning helps you to save money and increase workplace productivity. It also means your staff will be happier and focused.

### 7.2 Learning 24/7, anywhere

Many face to face courses only operate within normal office hours. By allowing staff to complete the course when and where they like you can make sure disruptions to your busy working schedule are minimised. This also means that your staff will be happier because they don't need to travel to specific training centres, and if they have important work to catch up on mandatory training can be done outside of office hours in exchange for lieu time. Most of our courses have an average learning time, and our CPD approved courses allow learners to print out certificates of proof.

### 7.3 It makes tracking of course progress a breeze

Perhaps the most important aspect of using computers for training is that it with a well implemented Learning Management System (LMS) makes it easy to track and prove progress for your staff and learners. This can be essential for our most popular courses where proof of mandatory training is required. Virtual College has developed its own tools to support our course content and learner tracking, called Enable.

### 7.4 It's discreet

Not everybody feels comfortable learning in a large group, especially if they find something hard to understand that co-workers have no problem with. E-learning allows each individual to tackle the subject at their own pace, with interactive tasks being set in place to ensure a thorough understanding throughout each module.

### 7.5 But a computer can't do everything can it!

Nothing is perfect, and we understand that in some cases (such as 17th Edition (BS7671:2008) EAL and City & Guilds 2382-10 electricians course) it is vital that people are tested under strict exam conditions. For that reason, Virtual College works with industry professionals to ensure all of our online course materials are approved and available to help you prepare for that final qualification. We also have a division dedicated to the implementation of 'blended learning', which is to take use e-learning alongside traditional face to face training to combine the benefits. We call this section of the business YP Training. Blended learning is the perfect approach for environments such as manufacturing plants where e-learning can teach the theory, but there is a need for practical training to ensure competency. The use of e-learning for the theory element of training means that shop floor workers spend less time away from the job. We've even transferred this process into the Apprenticeship sector. If you're concerned that some things can't be taught by a computer, or that e-learning just isn't for you, why not call our support team who'll be able to advise you.

The following table summarizes several opinions regarding the comparison between traditional learning and eLearning:

	<b>Traditional Learning</b>	<b>eLearning</b>
<b>Classroom Discussions</b>	The teacher usually talks more than the student.	The student talks at least as much as or more than the teacher.
<b>Learning Process</b>	The learning is conducted with the whole class participating; there is almost no group or individual study	Most of the learning process takes place in groups or by the individual student.
<b>Subject Matter</b>	The teacher conducts the lesson according to the study program and the existing curriculum	The student participates in determining the subject matter; the studying is based on various sources of information, including web data banks and net-experts located by the student.
<b>Emphases in the Learning Process</b>	The students learn “what” and not “how”; the students and the teachers are busy completing the required subject matter quota; the students are not involved in inquiry-based education and in solving problems, but rather in tasks set by the teacher.	The students learn “how” and less “what”; the learning includes research study which combines searching for and collecting information from web data banks and authorities on the communications network; the learning is better connected to the real world, the subject matter is richer and includes material in different formats.
<b>Motivation</b>	The students’ motivation is low, and the subject matter is “distant” from them.	The students’ motivation is high due to the involvement in matters that are closer to them and to the use of technology.
<b>Teacher’s Role</b>	The teacher is the authority	The teacher directs the student to the information.
<b>Location of Learning</b>	The learning takes place within the classroom and the school	The learning takes place with no fixed location

## 8. CONCLUSION

This study compares the effectiveness of online and classroom learning, attempting to go beyond grades and to include a logical assessment of interaction, effectiveness in achieving learning objectives, and student persistence. The results of this study indicate that although student performance is independent of the mode of instruction, certain courses (such as Research Methods in Administration) are more challenging to students who persist in the virtual environment than in the classroom. Furthermore, participation may be less intimidating and the quality and quantity of interaction may be increased in online classes. The findings have several implications for student learning, course development, and curriculum design. Online interaction can be used to enhance learning, especially for students who tend to be reserved in the classroom setting. Course developers of such courses need to carefully analyze what are the specific subjects that may hinder persistence and supplement instruction with face-to-face consulting, advising, or tutoring. Although an online class offers a comparably effective learning alternative, we should recognize that online learning has its unique advantages and disadvantages. In curriculum design, one needs to consider how to exploit and integrate the comparative advantages of different modes of instruction to specific courses by offering not only fully face-to-face or online

but also hybrid classes to overcome the constraints of time, place, and resources. The implications also extend into the research and practice of measuring online learning outcomes. This research effort shows that one can constantly determine— through observations, surveys, interviews, and analyses of student demography and course design—what leads to a greater, more effective learning outcome. This approach, in turn, will contribute to the training of online instructors in methods and the designing of educational support programs that allow students to succeed in the online environment.

Obviously, it can be seen that both e-learning and the traditional classroom have their own positives as well as negative qualities. Therefore, Alonso Díaz, and Blázquez Entonado report that many studies suggest that the best solution is to combine the two ways of learning, which is known as “**blended learning**”. Moreover, the role of the teacher is important. Hence, if a teacher interacts with the students at computer, the students’ motivation to use it increases and vice versa.

For those looking to get more of the social classroom experience, a traditional education might be the better fit. For those looking for a more flexible option, online education is something to check out. Another option is to use online resources to supplement and enhance your traditional education.

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